



Anza Borrego Desert
Integrated Regional Water
Management

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December 23, 2010

Department of Water Resources
DIRWM PO BOX 942836
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001
Attention: Joe Yun

Thank you for the evaluation and comments on our application for IRWM Planning Grant funds and for the opportunity to respond to your evaluation.

We ask for your consideration, based on a few items that we believe were not given sufficient credit, in the possible rescoring of our application. We have included in this response notations as to where documentation is included either in the application or the attached draft plan.

In the event that our final score remains below the award level, we request DWR's technical assistance in completing our application and/or the partial funding of various tasks so that the Plan can be completed and adopted prior to the initiation of your Implementation Grants program.

The IRWM process thus far has been very successful in that it has brought together several conflicting interests that have developed programs and projects that are beneficial to the region.

Request for Scoring Review

Our assessment of your comments suggests that some of the evaluation criteria included in our application may have been overlooked. The following are our comments in response to some of the criteria mentioned as deficiencies in our application. These appear in italics.

1 - DAC Involvement-The applicant provides full description of the DAC areas within the region, which consisted of the entire region. Historical information and future collaboration is discussed. DACs are notified of meetings through a local newspaper and the Borrego Water District website. The RWMG did attempt to involve local tribes in the process, but they declined to participate. The applicant is planning to have projects implemented within the DACs; however, the application did not provide enough detail about how the DACs will continue to be involved in the process in the future.

With regard to the comment about how the DACs would continue to be involved: our application described the current involvement procedure. Please note that in our Schedule, Task 1 Continue Monthly Stakeholder and Policy Cmte. Mtgs., illustrates that the current involvement process

continues throughout 2011 and 2012, a period of 18 months after the Plan is finalized. Thus, the DACs which are represented on the Stakeholder committee will continue to be involved in the process. In fact, with the sole exception of one committee member from Canebrake, the entire committee is made up of residents from Borrego Springs, a DAC community.

2 - Program Preference -The proposal demonstrates a high degree of certainty that three program preferences will be implemented through the plan. Those program preferences are: include regional projects or programs, address critical water supply or water quality needs of DACs, and effectively integrate water management with land use planning.

AB DESERT WRMG believes that the plan as describe in our application will implement additional program preferences. (We are not clear how this evaluation criteria, while listing in the Guidelines of only 8 program preferences, how some applications were awarded a total of 10 points for meeting the preferences) In any event, we list the additional program preferences that are met by our application in the following (2a-2d):

2a - Address Statewide Priorities: *Page 16 of the application (Section 1.10) describes the Stakeholder process exercise utilized to identify projects that conform to the statewide priorities. (Note that all candidate projects meet statewide priorities). Additionally, page 17 contains Table 6-2 (excerpted from the Draft IRWM Plan) that displays each of the candidate projects and their benefits and is grouped under each of the statewide priorities. Thus, statewide priorities were addressed as preferences in both in the draft plan and in the application.*

2b - Effectively integrate water management programs and projects within a hydrologic region identified in the California Water Plan; the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) region or subdivision; or other region or sub-region specifically identified by DWR

We believe that our application and draft Plan as submitted address as program preference the effective integration of water management programs and projects within a region or sub-region specifically identified by DWR or programs identified by the Regional Water Quality Control Board .

The California Water Board Control Plan (2006) of the Colorado Basin - Regional 7 identifies the Borrego Valley as hydrologic region (Anza Borrego Hydrologic Unit). See page 22 and 23 of the draft plan attached to the application.

Further, the Borrego Valley groundwater basin has been identified by DWR, in the following reports and activities:

- *The California Water Plan, Projected Use and Available Water supplies to 2010, Bulletin 160-83, December 1983.*
- *Borrego Valley Water Management Plan, 1984.*
- *Southern District, Groundwater Basin Assessment, 2002.*
- *California's Groundwater, Update 2003, Bulletin 118, October 2003.*

2c - Effectively resolve significant water-related conflicts within or between regions

Page 9 of the application (Section 1.2.12) describes the issues and conflicts for the region. This section states that the Borrego Groundwater Basin is the paramount issue in the northern area of the region. Three interest groups are identified: local residents, growers and environmental

organizations that make up the parties representing differing views in the conflict. Section 1.6 of the application (page 11), describes how the four goals of the Plan (Section 3.1 of the draft plan, p.30) were established and that these goals address the major issues and conflicts facing the region. (Goal No. 1 – Improve water supply reliability is particularly significant in resolving water supply conflicts.)

2d - Contribute to attainment of one or more of the objectives of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program

One of the CALFED objectives is Water Supply Reliability. Their program is achieved through five program elements: Conveyance, Storage, Environmental Water Account, Water Use Efficiency and Water Transfers.

Although our region is not presently connected to the California water importation systems, several of the projects proposed in the draft plan seek to develop a connection to the Colorado River Aqueduct and indirectly to the State Water Project. Additionally, projects in the attached draft plan envision the Borrego Groundwater Basin becoming a significant water bank for water storage. The project 'Imperial Irrigation District and Potential Water Banking' illustrates compliance with these two program elements (See Table 5-1 and Table 6-2 of the application - IID and Water Banking). Still other projects in the draft plan seek to increase water use efficiency (same tables –e.g., Purchase of Water Easements from Agricultural Lands).

Request for DWR Technical Assistance and/or Partial Funding

As indicated earlier, in the event that our final score remains below the award level, we request DWR's technical assistance in completing our application and/or the partial funding of various tasks so that the Plan can be completed and adopted prior to the initiation of your Implementation Grants program.

Please call if you have any questions.

Thank you.



Jerry Rolwing
Acting Chairman of the AB Desert RWMG
Interim General Manager, Borrego Water District



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Water Resources Consultant